



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SMS-01 SP-02 MCT-01 SY-02
SYE-00 H-01 INR-05 INRE-00 L-01 PM-03 PA-01
NSCE-00 CIAE-00 EUR-08 SSO-00 EA-06 /052 W
-----096758 191051Z /16-8

O R 190810Z FEB 79

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2275

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 1211

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS 2-19-79 (FLATIN, BRUCE A.) OR-M
TAGS: PINS, ASEC, AF

SUBJECT: THE STIEBELS' ACCOUNT OF AMBASSADOR DUBS' DEATH

REF: HONG KONG 2481 (NOTAL)

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. EMBASSY OFFICERS WHO WERE AT THE KABUL HOTEL THROUGHOUT THE INCIDENT OF FEBRUARY 14 HAVE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO MAKE ABOUT VARIOUS SIGNIFICANT POINTS MADE BY MR. AND MRS. MAYER STIEBEL (REFTEL):

(A) THE LOCATION OF THE STIEBELS (WHAT THEY DESCRIBED AS A DINING ROOM ON THE MAIN FLOOR) PRESENTED LIMITATIONS AS AN OBSERVATION POST. AMERICAN OFFICERS AT THE HOTEL CIRCULATED RATHER FREELY.

(B) WE ALSO NOTED THE "BLONDISH" SOVIET POLICE ADVISOR SEEN BY THE STIEBELS (PARAGRAPH 3).

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(C) THE SHOOTING REALLY STARTED AT 1250, NOT 1240

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(PARAGRAPH 4).

(D) WE ALSO NOTED THAT THE SHOOTING LASTED FOR APPROXIMATELY FORTY SECONDS (PARAGRAPH 4).

(E) AMERICAN OFFICIALS WHO WERE CLOSER TO ROOM 117 ON THE SECOND FLOOR ARE NOT CERTAIN WHETHER OR NOT A SINGLE SHOT PRECEDED THE GENERAL FIRING (PARAGRAPH 4). IN A SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH AN AMERICAN OFFICER, AFGHAN POLICE OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF THE ASSAULT INSISTED THAT A SHOT WITHIN THE ROOM INITIATED AN ALMOST SIMULTANEOUS POLICE RESPONSE.

(F) THE AMERICAN STRETCHER CREW WAS POSITIONED UPSTAIRS BEFORE THE SHOOTING STARTED (PARAGRAPH 4).

(G) THE FIRST STRETCHER BEING CARRIED DOWN THE STAIRS (PARAGRAPH 4) WAS THAT OF AMBASSADOR DUBS, WHO WAS ALREADY BELIEVED BY AMERICAN MEDICAL EXPERTS TO BE DEAD (HIS DEATH WAS SUBSEQUENTLY OFFICIALLY PRONOUNCED AT THE U.S. DISPENSARY AT 1305).

(H) THE NEXT TWO PERSONS CARRIED DOWN THE STAIRS WERE TERRORISTS WHOSE REMOVAL FROM ROOM 117 HAD BEEN WITNESSED BY AN AMERICAN OFFICER, WHO, ALTHOUGH NOT A MEDICAL EXPERT, BELIEVED ONE TO BE "PROBABLY DEAD" AND THE OTHER TO BE "POSSIBLY DEAD."

(I) U.S. OFFICIALS ALSO SAW THE THIRD TERRORIST REMOVED FROM THE HOTEL ALIVE AND KICKING.

(J) AN EMBASSY OFFICER ROUGHLY ANSWERING THE DESCRIPTION GIVEN BY MR. STIEBEL IN PARAGRAPH 5 WAS AMONG THOSE STRETCHER-BEARERS WHO RUSHED INTO ROOM 117 IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SHOOTING AND HELPED TO CARRY THE AMBASSADOR TO THE AMBULANCE. HE NEVER RETURNED UPSTAIRS; THEREFORE, THIS AMERICAN COULD NOT HAVE BEEN THE ONE MR. STIEBEL SAID HE SAW COMING DOWN THE STAIRS AFTER HE WAS PERMITTED TO GO UPSTAIRS AFTER HIS BAGS. THE QUOTATION IS MYSTIFYING AND APPARENTLY UNRELATED TO THE DUBS INCIDENT. ALSO, IF THE STIEBELS WERE IN THE DINING ROOM DURING THE INCIDENT, HOW DID THEY KNOW WHICH AFGHAN OFFICIAL WAS IN CHARGE ON THE SECOND FLOOR? (WE THINK IT WAS A YOUNG PLAINSCLOTHES MAN, OF MEDIUM HEIGHT, WEARING A

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DARK BLUE SUIT AND A LIGHT BLUE SHIRT.) IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE "AMERICAN" THAT STIEBEL SAW WAS ANOTHER HOTEL GUEST.

(K) AS FOR PARAGRAPH 6 OF THE REFTEL, AMERICAN OFFICERS SEEING WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE SAME PERSON REMOVING HIS ARMORED PROTECTION, THOUGHT THAT THE MAN WAS AFGHAN. WE DID NOT WITNESS ANY SOVIETS TAKING PART IN THE ACTUAL ASSAULT INTO ROOM 117. BECAUSE MOST AFGHANS BELONG TO VARIOUS INDO-EUROPEAN ETHNIC GROUPS, SOME ARE SOMETIMES MISTAKEN FOR EUROPEANS.
AMSTUTZ

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